

THE  
COLONIZATION SCHEME CONSIDERED,  
IN  
ITS REJECTION BY THE COLORED PEOPLE—IN ITS  
TENDENCY TO UPHOLD CASTE—IN ITS  
UNFITNESS FOR CHRISTIANIZING AND CIVILIZING  
*THE ABORIGINES OF AFRICA,*  
AND FOR PUTTING A STOP TO  
**THE AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE:**

IN A LETTER TO  
THE HON. THEODORE FRELINGHUYSEN  
AND

THE HON. BENJAMIN F. BUTLER;

BY  
SAMUEL E. CORNISH AND THEODORE S. WRIGHT,  
PASTORS OF THE COLORED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES IN THE CITIES OF  
NEWARK AND NEW YORK.

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TO THE  
HON. THEODORE FRELINGHUYSEN  
AND THE  
HON. BENJAMIN F. BUTLER:

NEW YORK, April 1, 1840.

GENTLEMEN:—

The undersigned, Colored citizens and Ministers of the Gospel, have not been inattentive to the course of the Colonization meetings, which you have either been active in getting up in this city, during the winter, or in the proceedings of which you have shared. As the sole object of these meetings was to act on the interests of the colored people, it is a matter of course, that we should feel, in a good degree, anxious about their results. And this the more especially, as none of that class were invited to take part in them, and they have been carried on without any reference whatever to their wishes or opinions. Shut out from these meetings, where, it would seem altogether essential, that our views should be fully known, our natural recourse is to the press. The fitness of resorting to the press in matters of high public concernment, such as you have, again and again, in the most formal and impressive manner, represented the colonization scheme to be, is sanctioned by every day's use of it in the discussion of such matters. The propriety of addressing ourselves to you, who stand out before the community among the most distinguished of its advocates, no one will question—any more than you will our right to do so.

But we have another and a stronger reason for addressing to you what we have to say on the present occasion. If, among those who are earnestly urging forward Colonization, there be any, who, it may be supposed, will weigh our arguments and judge of our facts *fairly*—any, who can be brought to sympathize with those who are still suffering the inconveniences, the harassings, the afflictions, the perils, which that inexorable scheme ceases not to bring on them—such will most probably be found among the learned and intelligent and liberal of the *Christian* community. Such you are represented to us to be. Viewing you in this light, we say not a word against your sincerity, when you profess to have in view only the promotion of our happiness—however fully we may be convinced, that you have mistaken the channel in which your beneficence should be made to flow.

It is not our intention, at this time, to enter on the relations of the Colonization scheme to the multiplied interests of our country. We propose limiting ourselves, mainly to a few of the subjects discussed in your addresses delivered at the meetings before referred to;—to the effect of the scheme on the colored people of the free States;—and its probable influence in civilizing and christianizing Africa, and putting an end to the slave trade.

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I. Mr. Butler asserted, that the Colonization project was received with great delight by the colored people, for whom it was set on foot, and that they "*yearned in their hearts for Africa.*" If this had been said of *southern slaves*—if it had been asserted that *they* "*yearned for Africa,*" or indeed, for any other part of the world, even more inhospitable and unhappy, where they might be free from their masters, there would probably have been no one to dissent from the opinion. But so far as it was intended to apply to the free colored people of the South, and to the colored inhabitants of the free States, we cannot—even after making liberal allowance for the poetic coloring with which it was found expedient to invest what ought to have been a plain business matter—we cannot, we say, find sufficient grounds for excusing, much less justifying Mr. Butler for saying, "*the free colored people have hearts which yearn for Africa.*" A few undeniable facts will justify us in this judgment—while they serve to correct the error of Mr. B., and save him from falling into it on any future occasion.

The Colonization society was scarcely known to have been organized, before its object was protested against, in a public meeting of the free colored people of Richmond, Va. Not long afterward, (in August, 1817,) the largest meeting ever yet held of the colored people of the free States—the number being computed at 3000—came together in Philadelphia, to consider the Colonization scheme. Mr. James Forten, a man distinguished not only for his wealth and successful industry, but for his sufferings in the Revolutionary war, presided at its deliberations. After ample time allowed for duly considering every benefit which Colonization held out to the colored people, there was not a single voice in that vast assembly which was not raised for its decisive, thorough condemnation.

Meetings of a similar kind were held in Washington City, in Baltimore, New York, Providence, Boston,—indeed, in all the cities, and in most of the large towns, throughout the free States. The abhorrence which was generally expressed of the whole scheme proved, that those to whose acceptance it was offered regarded it but as little more merciful than *death*. From the earliest period of those public meetings up to this time, we fearlessly assert, that no credible testimony can be adduced, showing, that there has been any abatement in the repugnance of the colored people to colonization. In January, 1839, a large public meeting was held in this city, at which the following expression of sentiment was unanimously given:

"Whereas, we, the people of color, citizens of New York, feel and know that the American 'Colonization society' is the source whence proceed most of the various proscriptions and oppressions under which we groan and suffer;—and believing, that the most efficient remedy we can apply, is, to reiterate the sentiments which we have, *at all times and places*, heretofore entertained and expressed—thereby showing, that our present opposition is not of late origin, but of as long standing as the existence of the scheme itself; and believing also, that when our opinions are known, the blighting influences of that unhalloved offspring of slavery cannot so successfully be exercised against us:—we therefore, *in solemn meeting assembled*, do deliberately and unanimously enter our protest *against the whole scheme,*" &c.

So late as the 16th of December, a meeting of the colored people was held in Philadelphia, to take into consideration a letter on the subject of Colonization, which the Rev. Andrew Harris had received from the Rev. R. R. Gurley.

The letter had previously been submitted to a public meeting, and by it to a Committee. We cite a part of their report, to show in what temper the proposition it contained, even when coming from one so cautious and wary in his approaches as Mr. Gurley, was met by that assembly. Speaking of the letter, the committee say:—

"They find therein nothing but the same stereotyped and wicked falsities; nothing but the same glaring inconsistencies, and fraudulent pretensions; nothing but what is hateful in motive, diabolical in principle, and murderous in design." One of the resolutions offered by the committee was in these words;—

"Resolved, That all the projects which contemplate our removal from the land of our birth, and affections will be looked upon as SPECULATIVE, DETESTABLE AND TRAITOROUS." The report was unanimously adopted.

Besides the uniform testimony furnished by large meetings throughout the free States,—and in the Slave States, too, whilst they were permitted to be held—there is the additional fact, that the colored people have entirely ceased emigrating from the former. The poetic machinery by which the scheme was urged, at first beguiled *some*, and they went to Liberia, but to lie down in their graves. The fate of the forty emigrants who went out in the Brig Vine, which sailed from Boston at an early period of the enterprise, bears mournful testimony to the reality of the delusion. They perished in a short time—the pestilence not leaving *one*, it is believed, to communicate to their friends in this country the story of their disappointment and death.

Now, gentlemen, had you known the foregoing facts, we do not believe you would have asserted, that the "free colored people had hearts which yearned for Africa." Why you did not know them, important as they are, and accessible too; why you hazarded an assertion so pernicious to your colored fellow citizens, without first ascertaining whether it was true or not, is for you, not us, to explain.

II The Colonization scheme was set on foot, and is yet maintained by Slaveholders, with the view, as they have not been backward to declare, of perpetuating their system of Slavery, *undisturbed*. From the first, no very high expectations seem to have been entertained, that an enterprise, so unnecessary, so unnatural, so condemned by the most elemental truths of political economy, so profitless, so perilous, bearing about it so little of hope, so much of despair, would commend itself strongly to that class of the community to which it purported solely to be addressed. But little reliance appears to have been placed on obtaining their *voluntary* consent to exchange for the fens and morasses of barbarous and heathen Africa, this, the country of their fathers for generations, and of their own nativity—where land was abundant and cheap—where labor was in demand and its rewards sure—where education could be obtained, albeit, for the most part, with difficulty—where the common ordinances of religion, as well as its higher institutions were established—where every interest had the promise of advancement—and where, notwithstanding they were called to suffer many ills brought on them by others, they might yet live in hope, that the dark cloud of Slavery which had so long obscured the free principles asserted by our governments, would one day pass away and permit these principles to shine in all their warmth and effulgence, if *not on themselves*, on no very distant generation of their descendants. The benefits (?) proposed to the free colored people by a removal, which

involved the necessity to a great extent, of breaking up their domestic relations—relations singularly dear to them, because of the sweet and (*we speak from experience*) enduring consolations they afforded in seasons of persecution and distress;—of exposing their lives to the death-damps of Africa under an equatorial sun—their own morals, and those of their children, to the influences and temptations of the most treacherous and sin-sunken heathen that live, and of the demons called *Christians*, by whose teaching and example these same heathen have been raised to their eminence in vice and crime;—all these benefits, we say, were unheeded, notwithstanding they were dressed out in the gaudy and gorgeous drapery of the poet, recommended by the adroitness of the rhetorician—pressed by the eloquence of the orator, and, what is more, sanctified by a standing proclamation of the Priesthood, both religious and political, investing each emigrant, irrespective of character or conduct, with the solemn office and standing of a Christian Missionary to the heathen. But every appeal was ineffectual, and so far as the Society depended on the *voluntary* consent of the colored people, it might as well have been dissolved.

Whatever individual exceptions there may exist among Slave-holders on the score of *goodness and gentleness*, (that there may be such we will not here stop to enquire) as an *embodied interest*, they know no retiring ebb when moving upon objects connected with their atrocious system. The political history of the country, from the time when South Carolina and Georgia refused to enter the Union, unless the traffic in human flesh should be secured to them for twenty years, proves this. Their struggle and their triumph on the Missouri question proves this. Their fierce onset—guilefully laid aside, not abandoned—to add Texas to our territory, with the audacious avowed purpose of strengthening and perpetuating the slave-system, proves this.

Against such an enemy, glorying in his many victories, and who had never yet been fairly defeated, even when assaulting decisive *majorities*, it was not to be expected, that so feeble an adversary as the free colored people could successfully contend. Their modestly declining the advantages of removal to Africa brought them neither protection nor peace. "*Carthago delenda est*" had gone forth from the Slave-holding power against them, and the "*element*" in our social organization which disturbed the "*system*" was to be rooted out. Nor did the Slave-holders now confine their aims to such of the colored class as resided amongst them, and in contact with their slaves. No: they comprehended all the colored inhabitants of the free States; for well did they know, that whilst there remained a single prosperous colored man at the North, so long would there be a standing rebuke to the oppressor of his brethren.

Failing in their appeal to the colored people, where it ought, in fairness, to have ended, the Slaveholders next had recourse to the *whites*, with whom they knew it could be made more effective. To this end, a new school was instituted, whose teachers first discovered and taught the dogma, that there is in the white man an inherent prejudice against his colored brother, so fixed, that its removal, whilst the latter remains in *this country*, is not only beyond all human power, but beyond Christianity itself, "*the power of God*," but that it might surely be mitigated at least, if not extinguished, provided the Atlantic Ocean could be made to roll between them. This was taught, too, in the face of such facts, as, that the toilet attendants of the most fashion-



able and mincing females were *colored*; that the cooks, the dining-room servants, the drawing-room servants, the "body" servants of the wealthy, the luxurious, the intellectual, were *colored*; and that multitudes of these same colored people could claim, unquestioned, through a common paternity, fraternal and sisterly relations to those whom they *served*.

[When the slave-holder based his movement, not on any supposed state of facts, the existence of which might be denied; nor on any supposed philosophical truths about which men might reason—but on a state of mind that cannot, in an absolute sense, be denied as existing in our neighbor—one that decides without facts or arguments, and therefore cannot be reasoned with, he showed much of the wisdom of the serpent. When he directed prejudice against an *accident* of our nature which Infinite Wisdom had incorporated with it—one which, therefore, God will not, and man cannot remove, the malicious subtilty of the device is altogether worthy the high parentage from which all similar devices proceed. For had they based it on a *fact*, such as, that we held opinions on religion and government hostile to those of the whites, then might it have been denied; or, (admitting it to be true) further instruction and more light might have brought the heretical up to the approved standard. If on the fact, that we were poor—that we did not possess the average amount of wealth—then, might aroused industry and enterprise have swept away the objection. If, our descent from a slave ancestry, and our being associated in the mind, on that account, and by reason of our color, with the degraded slave of the South, (where alone it ought ever to have been placed) then would breaking the yoke of Southern bondage have also broken up this position. But no: they were too wise to hazard their cause by placing it on grounds to which fact, or argument, or reason, or right, or truth had any relation.

**PREJUDICE!** What is it? Lexicographers tell us, it is a decision of the mind formed without due examination of the facts or arguments which are necessary to a just and impartial determination. And *prejudice against color*! What does this mean? You are both sensible—nay, learned men. Pray, instruct us in this mystery of slave-holding philosophy—scarcely spoken of in Britain, wholly unknown and unfelt among the learned, the wise, the refined of France and the other nations of Europe. Can prejudice exist against that which has in it nothing of the moral or the intellectual? Is it a down right absurdity to say of men, that they are prejudiced against *sound* or *sight*—against the *earth*, or the *sea*, or the *air*, or *light*? And is it a less one to say, that they are prejudiced against *color*? If not, how is it, gentlemen, that you can connect your names and give your influence to a great National movement, (one which it pleased you to say, we were more indebted to for the integrity of the Union than to any other cause since its commencement) resting for support on a *philosophical absurdity*? Or how, to a scheme of benevolence which can be carried on, only by keeping up a prejudice against your poor brother, when you would not venture alone into your closets before our Common Father, and praying, say—

"We thank thee, O God, for the success which has thus far attended the efforts which have been made to raise up and increase prejudice against the work of thy hand in the person of our colored brethren;—carry it on to a full consummation; but if this cannot be granted, change, thou, then, their *color*; and in all things pertaining to their form and visage let thy work of Infi-

the Wisdom be so modified as to adapt itself to the prejudices of us, a happier and more favored portion of the race—that we may, thus, be persuaded to love them as brethren belonging to the great family thou hast made.”

We have said thus much on the nature of prejudice, because, first, it is essential that the *principle* on which the present movement against the peace and repose of the colored inhabitants is founded should be fully understood; second,—our respect for your virtues and intelligence forces on us the belief, that you have not bestowed on the scheme that deliberate consideration, which on account of the wrongs it inflicts, is called for, at the hands of every benevolent man who has unwarily connected himself with it.

But you are ready to say,—*We do not cherish this prejudice against our poor brother, because of the complexion God has given him—we look on it as sinister and sinful.* Why, then, do you act as if you did? Why countenance those who do cherish it, and who bring on us such numberless ills? What discrimination can be made, except by the veriest casuist, between those who, disclaiming a principle, yet encourage others to act on it,—and those who act professedly in obedience to the principle? A man may, from principle or education, or even from prudential considerations, be averse to committing a particular crime—robbery, for instance; yet if he *intentionally* so act as to encourage others who feel no such restraint, his conduct, in a moral point of view, is as criminal as that of the actual perpetrator. And the wrong suffered by the robbed party would not be felt any the lighter, because of the mental reservations and the qualms of conscience of the instigator. So it is in our case. You, who do not hate us, by coöperating with those who do, encourage them. We suffer the *wrong*;—and it ministers but little of consolation, to be told that *you* feel none of the prejudice which others are pouring out in full profusion on our heads.

But you are ready again to say,—*This prejudice is an EXISTING FACT THAT CANNOT BE ALTERED; therefore we act on it.* Now, that there exists throughout the country a prejudice against us is undeniably true. How far this prejudice, springing out of slavery, has been kept up by the coöperation of influential men at the North with Southern slaveholders, we shall not now stop to inquire; neither shall we, to show how these same men, by pursuing a different course, might have stayed the slaveholding power, weakened the bands of slavery, and brought about a happier state of things throughout the free States, at least, so far as the colored people are concerned.

But an *existing* state of things does not imply, that it is to be *permanent*, much less *perpetual*. Not very long ago, throughout Europe, there was a strong prejudice existing against the Jews. In many respects, they were as evil-entreated as we are. They were not unfrequently banished from the countries in which they were born and brought up. Their persecutors had all the advantage of the argument based on “existing” prejudice: and it is by no means unlikely, that the most *religious* of them may have advanced it, out of pure compassion to these unhappy people, and in order to reconcile to their own consciences what, without some pretext of good, would have appeared an act of injustice and cruelty. But this prejudice against the Jews shows no signs of *perpetuating* itself. It is rapidly giving way before the influence of a religious and philosophical age; the Jews are fast acquiring civil privileges; are aspiring to a higher tone of character and morals, and

beginning to be esteemed, as other men are, according to their *merits*. But in what light are their persecutors viewed? Either as exceedingly wicked or foolish, and often both.

But we may be told, that, in the case of the Jews, there was no ineffaceable distinction (as with the colored people) to prevent their becoming incorporate with the rest of the community. Granted. But the same yielding of prejudice to reason and humanity is taking place in the West Indies, in relation to the colored people there, since the particular cause which engendered and kept it alive has been removed. The moment *slavery* was abolished, prejudice against *color* was seen to be on the wane, and men began to be respected according to their worth. So great has been the change among the proprietors and property-holders; so completely have they become reconciled to *color* in freemen, that nothing would be more strenuously resisted *now*, than an attempt to persuade the colored people to remove from the islands, where, as slaves, they first heard the jubilee of freedom. And we venture the prediction, that after the same jubilee shall have sounded throughout our slaveholding South—which, we trust, we may all live to hear—instead of the Southerners being seen anxiously instigating the removal of the colored people, there will be nothing that would be considered more worthy of the *Lynch practice* than an attempt of the kind—no, not even the proclaiming amongst them *now*, that “all men are created free, and entitled to their liberty.” Yes, gentlemen, let slavery once be abolished, and, our word for it, you will find your argument based on prejudice against color of but little weight.

To say of a community, that it is laboring under a present, an existing prejudice, offers no disparagement to the power of truth; but to say, that it is laboring under a prejudice which is *irremovable*, is to pronounce, that error is an overmatch for truth, and to despair of the improvement of the world. To assert of a people, that they will always be guided by prejudice in relation to *any* interest, is to declare, that they are hopelessly stupid and besotted. That such a notion should be entertained by minds that reflect but a little, ought not to be expected; but that it should be cherished and inculcated by gentlemen who, from the nature of their pursuits, may be regarded as *professional* investigators of truth—by gentlemen who can testify to the efficacy of that agent in exterminating deep-set prejudices from their own hearts; and who, beholding its mighty powers, contemplate them with awe, and look to them for the expulsion of all error, the casting out of all wrong, and the renovation of the world;—this, we say, seems passing strange.

But you may say, that, *seeing the colored people cannot, as a class, “rise” to an equality with the community around them, much less to honors and distinctions, and that they cannot be happy here, we merely act on the popular prejudice with a SINGLE VIEW TO THEIR HAPPINESS*. Whilst we by no means draw in question the sincerity of this declaration, we yet beg leave to say, that the body of the colored people of this country who are free, are not *minors*; or, if they are so considered by others, they have not yet been divested of the common law right of choosing their guardians; that this they have not as yet done, but have considered—as in the case of other men—that their happiness has been committed to their own keeping; and that, as a class,



they deem themselves reasonably well qualified, on the score of intelligence, to judge what will most promote it. After mature consideration, they decided against the Colonization scheme, as eminently hostile to their happiness. The working of the scheme for twenty years has served but to confirm them in the soundness of their decision. All this time, they have been suffering under malignant influences, which, if they were not engendered by the scheme, were greatly aggravated by it. They have remonstrated as strongly as they could; they have entreated as earnestly as they could. But, thus far, it has all been of no avail.

Not long since, the colonization society decided on altering its Constitution. On first hearing this, the hope sprang up, that we were, after so long a time, to be delivered from the persecutions we were suffering from this source; and that the conductors of the scheme, after a fruitless trial of twenty years, to recommend it to the free colored people—after they had seen them not only reject it, but unceasingly to regard it as their worst enemy—after all emigration had ceased, *except of slaves sent out by the authority of their masters*—had at last become sensible how indecent, nay, how unjust and unfeeling it was, to persist longer in pressing it on our acceptance. How great has been our disappointment to find, that on the occasion alluded to, the Society in the face of these facts, made no substantial alteration of its constitution; and that it continues to this hour, to hold out to the world as its *only* object, the removal of the free people of color to Africa—that very people whose *free consent* was a preliminary to their removal, and who for twenty years have done all they could do, to show to its projectors how, *ex animo*, they repudiated, scorned and dreaded the scheme from beginning to end. Had you changed your purpose, and dedicated your labors to the transportation and colonization of *slaves* sent out by their masters, we should have been at peace, and no one would probably have excepted to the scheme. But how can it be expected that the colonizationists, thus acting, can be regarded by us as our best friends and safest guides!

Besides, where are the proofs of warm regard for our happiness on the part of colonizationists? Have they aided and encouraged us in the education of our children? No! They say we ought not to be encouraged to this, because it would induce us to remain here. Have they sought to secure to us those political and civil privileges and rights, without which, *in their own case*, they would look on themselves as grievously oppressed? No! They say our present disabilities "ought to be maintained in all their rigor." Have they perilled for us their lives, or their persons, or their reputations, or their property? If so, say when,—where. Have they protected and comforted us when assailed by the most brutal persecutions? Tell us the occasions; we can recall none such. Have they once rebuked the slaveholder, our envenomed enemy, for his pitiless oppression of our brethren? No! But they have made of him an ally in the work of *benevolence* projected for us,—and to show him with what entire good faith they intend to perform their part of the covenant, they have united with him in proclaiming to the world, that we are "*of all descriptions of our population the most corrupt, depraved and abandoned.*"

Such, gentlemen, in the view of the great body of the colored people, are

the proofs which the Colonizationists bring of their title to be considered and consulted as our surest friends.

But, again:—"We cannot, in this country, rise to an equality with the community, much less to honorable places," &c. In meeting this objection, we do not intend to take either side of the question, whether the colored man is naturally equal or inferior to the white in intellectual and moral powers? What the conclusions have been, which have followed *a priori* or phrenological arguments, as to this matter, we have not been very careful to enquire. Leaving such, whatever may be their decision, out of the case, as too uncertain for the basis of a course of action—at all events, where experiment can be resorted to—we hesitate not to say, that the question, whether or not the colored man can "rise" in this country is, as yet, wholly undecided. We do not pronounce that he *could*, or that he *could not*; for the experiment that will satisfy a philosophical mind as to either remains to be made. Whilst we will not say, that even under the most favorable circumstances, the colored man would prove himself equal to the white, neither can it be said on the other hand, that he would *not*. Neither does it lie in the mouth of him who has succeeded, by force or guile, in binding the colored man hand and foot, and is standing on his neck, to assert, that his *natural* powers to rise, and stand erect, and perform all the offices of perfect manhood, are weak or defective. The first impulse of a by-stander would be, to cry out:—"Release him from his chains!—strike off his fetters!—relieve him from the stifling pressure of your own weight!—try him! and if, after time allowed for restoring the circulation of his blood to its free and wonted course, and for suppling his muscles, numbed and deadened by the ligatures that bind him,—if, after this, he be unable to rise, your assertion may gain credit—but not till then."

But, supposing it true, that the colored man is decidedly inferior to the white—does it follow that he ought to be exiled? If so, what shall be done with many large family-connections of whites, who, from generation to generation, as far back as they can be traced, have not produced a single individual qualified for any but the most humble occupations—who are set down, on all hands, as below the mass of their neighbors in intelligence, and who give no promise of ever rising above their past and present condition. Shall they be sent away? You at once reply, No: But, we answer, *they can never "rise"—all the evidence in the case proves this, and nothing else.* You rejoin—*What of that? Suppose every man in the country was a Milton, or a Newton, or a Bowditch, and every woman a Somerville, or a Hemans, or a de Stael,—what would become of us? Who would FEED us? Why, we should soon be at the point of starvation. No, Sirs,—society was never intended to be a unit in relation to mind or occupation. It has high places and low places, both stimulating, when properly understood, to laudable effort; and it has innumerable intermediate places, all of which ought to be filled and all of which, in a well adjusted social structure, will be filled—and that in the most easy and natural way—if the members of the community are only left free to fall into the several niches for which they are fitted.*

Now, gentlemen, all that the colored people ask, is, that these sober and obviously sensible views be applied in their case. Let their manacles be struck off—let the suffocating pressure of unequal legislation be removed, and they left free, as others, to exercise their powers to their fullest extent;

if *then*, they should prove inferior to the whites in mental force, they will spontaneously, as a matter of course, and without any feeling of discontent, fall into the most humble conditions of life—be devoted to the most laborious occupations,—to those that are the least honorable, but as necessary to the well being of society to be filled as the highest and the *most* honorable. But this natural and peaceful order of things can never take place, while they are oppressively dealt with in the *legislation* of the country—as long as the *law* withholds from them the stimulus it gives to others to exert the faculties they possess to the utmost, for their own and the general good. As long as they are thus *artificially* depressed, the humane will exert themselves *artificially* to raise them. Place them on the same platform with others as to *civil right*, and you take away all ground for artificial aid. Then the outcry against attempts to elevate the colored man, by inducting him into ordinary social intercourse with the whites, will cease. So will the unnecessary alarm about amalgamation,—for all such matters will then stand on their natural basis.

III. But the colonizationist finds, in the CHRISTIANIZATION OF AFRICA, and the BREAKING UP OF THE SLAVE-TRADE, enough to justify him for the ills he is bringing on us. Were it even certain, that these benefits would ensue, it would, in no wise, be a warrant for the *wrongs* he inflicts; for to “*do evil that good may come*” is not sounder in morals now, than it was a hundred years ago, nor less indefensible in Protestants than in Catholics. But we shall attempt to show that, the expectation of these benefits is delusive—not without the hope, that, should we succeed, but to a reasonable degree of probability, it may have its influence on your minds.

We do not propose to rest our success on a comparison of the multitudinous and contradictory testimonies that have reached this country, of the ill or good success which has, thus far, attended the Liberian colony in christianizing the aborigines and breaking up the slave-trade. We shall omit all argument from them; first, because they *are* contradictory; second, because these testimonies, together with the comparisons of them, and the inferences, are, already to a considerable extent, before the public. To these we shall make no reference where they admit of the least dispute. We wish to have the questions before us decided, not on insulated facts, nor by accidental or transitory occurrences, but on those broad and comprehensive and permanent principles, which are known to operate with unbroken uniformity, on man in a social state, wherever, and under whatever form, that social state exists.

We call your attention, then, to the colonization of heathen countries in modern times, conducted solely by colonists from christian countries. Samples only of this we shall give. In 1492, when Hispaniola was discovered it contained a *million* of people, described by Columbus as the most “affectionate, tractable and peaceable” that he had ever seen. Sixteen years afterward, when the Governor (Albuquerque) made an enumeration, there were but 14,000 left. They had been reduced to this remnant, by severe labor, insufficient rest and food, and other hardships, notwithstanding all the efforts of the Spanish Crown to protect them from the cruelty and rapacity of the colonists. Spain was then, as she is now considered, one of the most *religious* nations in Europe.

The Indians have disappeared before the Pilgrim Fathers of New England,



—and this, too, without any perceptible amelioration of their moral condition. No community has better merited the title of *religious* than the settlers of New England.

So did the Indians in Pennsylvania disappear before the colonists of William Penn, the brightest example on record of a Christian statesman.

Throughout our southern States similar unhappy results have taken place. This generation is witness to the total extinction of some of the mighty tribes that once bore sway on the soil where we inhabit—to the wasting away of others—to the transfer of their remnants from our midst to the wilderness, on the ground that *separation from us* is the only way in which they can be civilized, or even preserved from extinction—to the hunting down with blood-hounds such of them as we have been unable to subdue in customary warfare, and who refuse to become exiles from the land of their fathers, and commit themselves to our broken faith. This is a melancholy picture, but it is one that is presented by a people who would be unwilling to have their *Christianity* disparagingly compared with that of any other people on the globe.

The fact, that Christian colonization has either uniformly wrought the extermination of the aborigines, or that it *tends* to do so, except where the Colonists themselves lapse into barbarism—as was the case with the Portuguese settlements on the western coast of Africa—has not unfrequently been adduced, to prove the ill success that will *probably* attend all similar efforts for the Christianization of the heathen; but nowhere have we seen a sufficient ground-work laid, to show, *why* these results have been so uniform heretofore, and why they may, *to a moral certainty*, be expected to exhibit the same uniformity hereafter. Colonizationists generally seem satisfied with attributing these remarkable phenomena to the accidental difference of *color*. This easy, off-hand solution owes its birth, if we mistake not, to the colonization-school. It was not dreamed of, till this project was set on foot by the slaveholders to secure a more quiet existence to their "system," and it has always kept close company with its parent—being found useful in reconciling honest and conscientious persons to the indirect compulsion it was found necessary to resort to, to wring from the colored people their "consent" to be exiled. But is it convincing, gentlemen, to a philosophical enquirer—does it satisfy *your* minds? If so, how do you dispose of the fact, that, in the whole history of colonization by the white race among the colored, from the time of Vasco de Gama till now, no mention is made of *color*, as offering an obstacle to aboriginal Christianization? Or, of the fact, that, in all the records of missions, since their earliest institution, there is not an occurrence, direct or incidental, serving to show, that a white missionary has been any the less useful among the colored heathen of every shade, even the deepest, because he differed from them in complexion? Go to the Islands of the Pacific—of the Indian ocean—to our own aborigines—to the black—yes, the *black* natives of Northern India—to the negroes of Eastern Africa—of Western Africa—and you never once hear it whispered, that the missionary would be more acceptable, were he of a darker hue. Shall we remind you, here, of the opinion of the late Governor Ashmun—decidedly one of the ablest minds that has been connected with the Liberian scheme? In commending to the Board of Managers at Washington, a plan

for a Missionary establishment—to be independent of the colony, that it might the better mediate in the differences that he supposed would arise between it and the natives—he hesitated not to say, that “the missionary or principal of the establishment ought of preference to be a *white man*.” One of the reasons for this—and in itself wholly sufficient—was, that “*the natives have universally a most affecting persuasion of the superiority of white men.*”

With such testimony in favor of our position—and none to oppose or contradict it—we conclude, that, in the hue of the white missionary, no obstacle is presented to the christianization of the darkest-colored heathen; and that difference of complexion is not to be numbered among the primary causes, why the aborigines of all countries have uniformly dwindled away, or disappeared, before a successful system of christian colonization. These causes, lying deeper than the skin, and having no relation to it, may be embodied in this principle,—*the Christian form of society is one in which the aborigines can have no place and act no part.*

A christian colony (we use the word *christian* as opposed to *heathen* or *pagan*) institutes society, of course, on the principles to which they have been accustomed. Consequently, no provision is made for the heathen—such an element being *incompatible*. This society at once assumes, as is unavoidable, *superiority*; it becomes the upper caste. A consciousness of *inferiority* soon takes possession of the natives. The colony extends itself—or, at least, its jurisdiction—over a large scope of country, from which it is unnecessary, as yet, that the natives should be expelled. Thus, their social organization, whatever it be, they see overshadowed by that of the new-comers, and daily withering away under it. The example of the vicious among the colonists, addressing itself to the passions, is more influential than the example of the virtuous, which calls for restraints. Hence diseases are introduced unknown in heathen life—to the cure of which their skill is unequal. The spread of the colony—a mark of prosperity—circumscribes the hunting-grounds, diminishes the quantity of game, and makes the subsistence of the natives more precarious. The colonists, intent on their own concerns individually, or as a community, have but little intercourse with their rude neighbors, except as interest or convenience may, from time to time, call for it. In trading, they overreach them;—a thing as certainly to be looked for, as it is certain that they are superior to them in the knowledge of values. They lose the confidence of the natives; the latter become suspicious—and, at last, *hate*, because they are too weak to enforce retribution or inflict punishment. Thus, they resort to cunning and sinister devices. They see their own social organization crumbling to dissolution, and know that they are unqualified for any other. Old stimulants to high achievements have passed away—no new ones are supplied; and, unsupported by religious principle or hope, they inevitably sink down in the abjectness of those who, having lost all respect for themselves, feel that they have no title to the respect of others. That such a people must eventually perish every one is prepared to believe.\*

\* The ill success of colonies in christianizing heathen countries, affords negative evidence, at least, of the wisdom of both Protestant and Catholic directors of missions. They send out, at most, only a few families—not enough to constitute a class in society. They know, that the structure of heathen society is



But, during the whole of this consuming process, there may be, among the colonists, many good men, who, commiserating the condition of the natives, are made instrumental of heavenly blessings to individuals among them—as is the case in this country in relation to the Indians—but they can effect but little with the great mass, as long as they have to contend with the corrupting influences of a majority of the colonists, or, as long it remains true, that “one sinner destroyeth much good.”

The operation of the principle to which we have attributed these results so disastrous to the heathen, and which we have attempted, though in a very summary manner, to indicate, is wholly unconnected with color. It has no relation to color. In the history of the cases there is nothing to warrant the opinion, that the results would not have taken place as they did, had the colonists been identical in color with the natives; or, that similar results will not again follow, whenever similar disparities exist, *irrespective of color.*

The particular instances to which we have called your attention—as, indeed, with a single exception, are all the other instances of modern colonization—are, of colonists drawn from the most educated, refined, and christian communities, going to heathen of the most simple, unsophisticated, and harmless habits—uncorrupted, too, by the vices of civilized life. If, from the nature of these enterprizes, success had not been really unattainable, the elements of character on both sides would have warranted the highest expectations. But no: after prosecuting them for generations, through scenes of injustice, and blood, and carnage, and usurpation, and desolation, at the bare recital of which posterity (it is to be hoped, more virtuous) will shudder and be astounded,—they have all failed—wholly failed, so far as the civilization or christianization of the aborigines is concerned.

Let us now compare the leading features in the cases presented with those in the one under consideration.

First—as to the *character* of the colonists, in reference to their qualifications for redeeming the continent of Africa from the vices and pollutions of

to be reformed and purified—not crushed, as it inevitably must be, whenever a christian class in society is set up in the same country. The heathen must not be made, at once to lose all respect for themselves, or their own social institutions: but they ought to have in the example of two or three Christian families—really such—that, with which they can compare themselves; and thus be persuaded, with as little mortification as possible, to alter what they will be apt enough to see is amiss. If the conduct of these families is seen to flow from their religious belief,—the belief will soon be embraced.

The opinion has sometimes been advanced, that if a general emancipation were to take place in the South, the colored people would waste away, as the Indians have. Those who advance it, seem not to have considered, that the social structure of the South is already formed; and that one of the *elements* of it is the colored population, to whom certain offices have been assigned; and that they can perform these offices as well in a state of freedom as in a state of servitude. If, when emancipation takes place in the South, the masters exercise ordinary prudence, there will hardly be any derangement of the business of the country. The emancipated—if fairly dealt by and paid for their work—will naturally continue in the discharge of offices to which they have been accustomed, and in which they have become expert;—the more especially, as there will be, at least for a long time, any other offices for them to labor in for their support.

idolatry and heathenism, and establishing christianity and civilization:—Governor Ashmun, writing to the board of managers, says, "*In the proportion of 6 out of 10, the emigrants may be expected to be illiterate;*"—"I must renew the painful inference that the emigrants to this country will bring with them no established moral habits;"—"Your emigrants I must also assume to be IMMORAL."

The Rev. Mr. Jones, a native of the south, a clergyman, and for some time, by permission of the planters, a missionary among the slaves, says of them, "*Generally speaking, they appear to us to be without God, and without hope, a nation of heathen in our very midst.*"

The Hon. Mr. Mercer, of Virginia, a Vice President of the colonization society, pronounces the free colored people, "*a horde of miserable people; the objects of universal suspicion, SUBSISTING BY PLUNDER.*"

The late Hon. John Randolph, of Virginia, calls them, "*DEPOSITORIES OF STOLEN GOODS AND PROMOTERS OF MISCHIEF.*"

The Rev. R. R. Gurley, Corresponding Secretary of the Society, declares, they are "*notoriously ignorant, degraded, and miserable, mentally diseased—scarcely reached in their debasement by the heavenly light.*"

The Hon. H. Clay, the President of the Society, says of them, that, "*contaminated themselves, they extend their vices to all around them, to the slaves and TO THE WHITES;*" and assures us, that "*of all descriptions of our population [the free negroes are] the most corrupt, depraved, and abandoned;*" thus, putting them even lower than the slaves of whom Mr. Jones speaks.

This, then, is the character—not drawn by us, but by the colonizationists themselves—of the persons who are to be sent.

Secondly, we will endeavor to ascertain the character of those to whom this band of missionaries, so rarely qualified for their work, are to be sent, and on whom they are to make their first aggressive movement toward the christianization and civilization of a continent. If other evidence were wanting, the fact that they have been engaged, for two centuries and more, in the accursed slave trade—carried on in the persons of their own countrymen, and this too, at the instigation of men, who, perverting the benefits of being born and brought up in a Christian land, have had their wits sharpened by avarice to every fiendish counsel and diabolical device—this, we say, if other evidence were wanting, would, of itself, be sufficient. But other evidence is not wanting. We again refer to Governor Ashmun.

"*Children receive no instruction from their parents, seldom parental correction; lying and petty thefts among them only excite merriment.*"

"*The adult is commonly devoid of moral principle altogether.*"

"*They have no forms of worship. The most enlightened among them are commonly the most superstitious.*"

"*Polygamy and domestic slavery are as universal as the scanty means of the people will permit. And a licentiousness of practice prevails, which not the worst part of any civilized community can parallel.*"

"*They are sunk, perhaps, to the lowest state of debasement to which human nature can descend. They are degraded to the condition nearly of the better sort of brutes in human form.*"

Being now in possession of the character of those who are to act, and of those who are to be acted on, in this magnificent enterprize for the exaltation and refinement, political and civil and religious, of a benighted continent, we are prepared—

Thirdly,—to look into the actuality of the movement, and to judge from the effects already produced by the coming together of the parties, to what extent the inflated expectations of its advocates have been authorized, and how far their extravagant hopes may continue to be indulged.

In 1820, eighty emigrants were despatched from this country by the President of the United States, under the authority conferred by the act of March 1819, in the *Elizabeth*—who were to be employed at the expense of the government in preparing accommodations for the reception of recaptured Africans. No territory having, as yet, been purchased, they effected a temporary location in the island of Sherbro, and at Sierra Leone. In December 1821, Lieutenant Stockton and Dr. Ayres, as agents of the Government under the act above mentioned, arrived on the African coast, and purchased Cape Montserado. The first colonial settlement was made at this point in June 1822, by the emigrants already mentioned. Whilst they were being transported to the Cape, an unpleasant state of feeling seems to have sprung up against them among the Deys, one of the neighboring tribes, from whom the purchase is alleged to have been made. The cause of it, if revealed, we have not been able to ascertain. But it rose so high, that on the arrival of the first division of the colonists, they were forbidden, and with menaces of violence, from landing. Notwithstanding, they finally succeeded in landing on a small island near the Cape, without any actual opposition. The agent, however, did not succeed—if he tried—in conciliating the friendship of the natives, and they seem not to have relinquished the purpose of compelling the removal of the colonists. Feigning reconciliation, they succeeded in getting possession of Dr. Ayres' person. As the condition of his enlargement, he agreed to accept the remnant of the goods which had been advanced, a short time before, in part payment for the lands, and thus annul the contract. It appears too, that he was enjoined to depart from the country—taking the colonists with him. This he "*continued to evade*," says Governor Ashmun, who is the historian of this unworthy proceeding, by "*delegating*" the want of vessels for the purpose.

Thus, Liberian colonization began, in *deceiving* the natives to say the least of it. Soon afterwards a "*secret, ex parte arrangement*" was made with King George, who resided on the Cape, by which the settlers were permitted to pass over from the island to the site of their intended town. The "*compliment*" paid for this privilege was "half a dozen gallons of rum, an equal amount in African trade, cloth and tobacco." Soon after this successful effort at negotiation with King George, an event took place strongly indicating the character of the colonists,—their deficiency in wisdom, their recklessness of the institutions and feelings and friendship of the natives. The custom of the coast appropriates to the petty chief, on whose lands a wreck takes place, the vessel with its entire cargo.\* An English schooner was wrecked on the territory of King George, and he sent his people to take possession. They were resisted by the captain and crew who sent to the colonists for assistance. Without attempting remonstrance or entreaty—even admitting that remonstrance or entreaty against the operation of a law of the country, would, in their circumstances, have been proper, but

\*By the common law of England, all wrecks were, anciently, the property of the Crown.



with rashness that seems akin to dementation, a boat was instantly manned and sent to their assistance, and a field piece brought to bear on the natives, who were accordingly routed, with the loss of several killed and wounded.

This act of folly greatly aggravated the feelings of discontent and suspicion already lodged in the breast of the natives. From what cause these discontents first arose, we repeat, we are not distinctly informed, but we gather from incidental circumstances in the account, that the people considered *the land to have been unlawfully granted by their kings*. Alleging this against one of them, (king Peter) he was capitally impeached, the accusation was duly substantiated, and it was with difficulty that he escaped the punishment of high treason.

Notwithstanding the unquiet and hostile feelings of the natives, no gentle means seem to have been tried to conciliate them. But such as are not unusual in similar cases were tried, and to all appearance, at least for the time, they were effectual. The chief, Ba Caia, who had, proved by multiplied acts of kindness, the sincerity of his professions of friendship to the colonists, found it necessary, on account of the exposed condition of his possessions and people, to keep on good terms with his neighbors, the Deys. The colonists, affecting however, to look on his conduct suspiciously, he was persuaded, with a view to a general adjustment of the difficulties connected with the grant, to call in the friendly mediation of king Boatswain, an old ally of his, and one of the most powerful chiefs of the Condoes. With savage promptitude, Boatswain appeared at the Cape to "do justice", as he said—bringing along with him a force sufficient to carry his decisions into immediate effect. This arbiter, having convoked the head chiefs of the neighborhood, the agents and principal settlers were called on to make known their complaints. They complained, as might naturally be expected, of the "bad faith" of the Deys, in relation to the land, and of the hostilities committed by King George, [of course, since the killing of his people in their attempt to take possession of the schooner.] What, if any thing, was said by the Deys and king George, in defence, it is not recorded. Boatswain pronounced his decision, which ended with this speech addressed to the agents.—*If these people give you further disturbance, send for me; and I swear, if they oblige me to come again to quiet them, I will do it to purpose, by taking their heads from their shoulders, as I did old king George's on my last visit to the coast, to settle disputes.*" A good admonition this to young King George.

These transactions all took place within two or three months from the first appearance of the colonists at the Cape. In this short time, so unwise had been their conduct, that they had excited the most decided feelings of alienation and distrust in the minds of the natives.

We thought it proper to be as minute as we have been in the foregoing account, which may be said to embrace the *first* epoch of Liberian colonization, in order that the spirit of the colonists, shown in the commencement of their intercourse with the natives—in their *weakness*, when, if ever, it would be most likely to be *gentle*—may be fully seen. We shall be more brief in succeeding details.

The fear of provoking Boatswain's resentment kept the natives quiet, up to the arrival in the colony of the Rev. Mr. Ashmun, in August 1822, as

agent of the United States. Notwithstanding what had taken place, he received assurances of friendship from many of the kings and head-men of the neighbouring tribes. That there was some sincerity in their professions may be believed from the fact, that several of them (as many as were allowed) sent their sons to reside with the agent, to receive instruction in the English language, &c. However this may have been, we find Mr. Ashmun on the 26th of November, only three months after his arrival, writing thus to the Secretary of the Navy: "*We are now engaged in a bloody and perilous war with the native tribes around us.*" The natives were defeated of course. The number of the slain on their side was never ascertained, though Mr. Ashmun supposes the "carnage was great." Ten or twelve trips of a canoe which would carry twelve persons, were seen to be made in transporting the dead and wounded across the Mesurado river. Twenty-seven bodies were discovered in the woods a few days after, when the stench from putrid carcases had "become intolerable." Propositions for peace were now, unsuccessfully however, set on foot; the war was renewed and another terrible carnage of the natives took place. In the negotiations between the parties, we find what the natives alleged as their ground of discontent. It was that "*having brought the low ground on Bushrod Island, the Americans, had seized on the Cape without right—that the country people visiting the settlement had been cheated and roughly used by the store-keeper—that the agents had not fulfilled their promises of instructing the people.*"

For several years, and during the remainder of Mr. Ashmun's administration, peace reigned. In 1832, war was made on the Deys and Gurrahs. They were beaten, of course—with a loss of "fifteen killed and many wounded." These are the wars which the colonists regard as having brought a considerable revenue of "glory" to them as a people.

So much for their warlike prowess—we will now examine whether as missionaries they are as likely to be equally successful.

In March 1825, Mr. Ashmun, in a letter from Monrovia, pressing upon the managers of the society the importance of sending white missionaries to Africa, says: "*Every month's experience proves to me, that our neighbors (the natives) ARE CORRUPTED BY THE INFLUENCE OF BAD EXAMPLES, AND DERIVE NO BENEFIT FROM THE GOOD, that are set in the Colony.*"

In May 1827, writing to the same body, he says: "*It is not known to every one, how little difference can be perceived in the measure of intellect possessed by an illiterate rustic from the United States and a sprightly native of the coast*"—"the fact certainly is, that the advantage is oftenest, clearly on the side of the latter."—"An unlimited indulgence of appetite; and the labored excitement and unbounded gratification of lust the most unbridled and beastly—are ingredients of the African character." Such is the common character of all; and it operates with all the power of an ever present example on the colonists. "from the moment of their arrival in Africa. It must produce its effects. It HAS produced them, and without a powerful counteracting agency, it must, at no great distance of time, as surely leaven the whole mass, as human nature shall continue what it is." Colonists thus suffer a double disadvantage—are subjected to all that is contaminating in the character of the natives, at the same time that they have passed beyond the reach of the corrective example of enlightened Christians.

Over



In Feb. 1834, Rev. Mr. Pinney (the Governor,) writing from Monrovia,

says—"The natives are perfect *negroes* (I mean those in town) and sorry am I to be obliged to say, that from my limited observation, it is evident, that as little effort is made by the colonists to elevate them, as is usually made by the higher class in the United States [the whites] to elevate the lower [the colored people]. Nothing has been done for the natives, hitherto, by the colonists, except, to educate a few who were in their families in the capacity of servants."

The same gentleman in 1836 publicly stated—"the colony has existed now for fifteen years, and yet the 20,000 Africans around it have not materially altered ANY of their manners—they dress in the same negligent way, their only clothing being a piece of cloth around the loins—they dwell in the same poor huts—they have the same mode of agriculture—as when we first came here."

The late Governor Skinner, in 1837, says, "but few of the natives have been civilized. I have known but FIVE instances; two of them are professors of religion." These five civilized were, in all likelihood, the "few" spoken of by Governor Pinney, as living with the colonists as "servants."

The foregoing are the statements of men holding the highest official station in the colony. Their account of its condition is to be presumed in every respect as favorable as the facts in the case would reasonably warrant. If they be true—and they are, entirely accordant—so far as we are aware, with the prose of the colony, if not with the poetry of its advocates in this country—where is the ground of hope, that Liberia is about to prove an exception to all the colonies of modern times?

IV. We will next examine whether the likelihood of the slave trade being broken up by the colonies, is as encouraging as the christianizing of the aborigines by the same instrumentality.

Without intending, in any way, to countenance the loathsome character given of the emigrant class by the colonizationists, we may safely hazard the opinion, that their moral restraints from engaging in the slave trade are not, in any way, stronger than those of the whites in this country. Now, although kidnapping, by the laws of (perhaps) all the States, is visited with severe punishment; and although public sentiment gives its support to the laws, yet kidnapping persons from the free States, and selling them for slaves at the south, is a business which is carried on by white persons among us, to by no means an inconsiderable extent, nor without a due regard to system. From all the free States bordering on the slave, and even from some of the farming slaveholding States, scores of persons, born undeniably free, are every year trepanned by kidnappers, and beguiled, or hurried forcibly away, into the planting South, where they are sold as slaves, with but little chance of regaining their liberty. Three young men, whose free birth admits of no question, were inveigled in this city, not very long ago, and taken to New Orleans, where they were sold as slaves, by the captain of the vessel with whom they sailed as hands. One of them has succeeded in getting back; all traces of the others are lost, and the kidnapper is unpunished. Nor, was it very long since, that three men, apparently confederates, were apprehended in Cincinnati, on suspicion of having kidnapped, and taken away, several colored people, who were suddenly missed from their dwellings. On examining the

party, ropes, cords, and straps with slip-knots, &c., and ingenious contrivances of various kinds for quickly and securely binding human victims, were found on them. And it was but the other day, that two citizens of Massachusetts were convicted of kidnapping, and selling as a slave in Virginia, a lad, the son of one of their neighbors. In ferreting out this case, another of the same kind was discovered. If now, with all these appliances and means of restraint—early education, public opinion, the danger of detection, disgrace, and punishment;—if all these prove ineffectual on the *whites*, for breaking down the slave trade in its most odious form *here among us*, ought it to be expected of the colonists, that they will *surpass* the whites, and not only refrain from engaging in the trade themselves, and reaping its large profits, but that they will outstrip their teachers in being *officious* to break it up?—and this too, in a part of the world where it is as much *the* great business, as the raising and selling of cotton is the great business of the planting South? Neither philosophy nor experience warrants such calculations.

The circumstances in which the southern slaves are brought up—and it is from this class that the colonists have, for a long time, been mostly drawn—are unfavorable to the supposition, that they would be averse to participating in the slave trade, or, to becoming slaveholders themselves. They who suppose, that men who have suffered the degradation, as well as the other ills, of slavery, would be the last to inflict the same ills on others, have not learned human nature in the same school we have. *Drivers* selected from slave-gangs are proverbially cruel. Slaves, of any color, becoming free in countries where their own race are in bondage, show as much, if not more eagerness (when they possess the means) to become masters, than such as are born free. And their treatment of their slaves is generally more cruel.

But what are the “unfavorable circumstances,” to the influence of which the slaves of this country are exposed? These are some of them. They see the bench, the bar, the banquet, the ball, the hall of legislation, the sanctuary of the Most High,—the things of this world—the things of the world to come,—all, in the hands, and under the direction, of slaveholders!

Can this fail of exerting a pernicious influence on an ignorant, uneducated slave?

And are there no such influences operating on the colored people of the free States? Who is it that is most caressed among us? *The slaveholder*. Who is it that is most honorably treated by the most honorable in the free states? *The slaveholder*. To whom do the Legislatures of the free states grant peculiar privileges—to whom give *carte blanche* to dishonor, their free principles and displace their free institutions, wherever he may travel in their confines, by suffering him to introduce among them, at pleasure, troops of slaves, with all the usages of a slaveholding country and constitution? To the *southern slaveholder*, and no one else. Is a political meeting to be harangued in New York, or Boston, or Philadelphia—where so sought after to do it as a Kentucky, or a Tennessee, or a South Carolina slaveholder? Is one of our wealthy and fashionable congregations to be preached to? What minister more sure of acceptance than he who visits the North, to sell his five hundred or thousand cotton bales, raised by the unpaid labor of his scores of slaves? Who so certain as he to hear, “welcome, brother”—while he that would rebuke him is repelled with, “begone, fanatic”!

Now, Sirs, can it be possible, constituted as human nature is, that such ho-

horns heaped on the slaveholder should not produce a strong effect on men of uneducated and undisciplined minds?

Thus brought to associate all that is dignified and desirable with slaveholding up to the period of their leaving this country, is it likely that the western coast of Africa will work a change for the better in the feelings of the emigrants? The kings and princes and head-men there, are all engaged in the slave trade. Whatever there is among them of wealth, of fashion, or pertaining to the court, it is all associated with the slave trade. On the western coast, *human bodies* are the great article of traffic, just as on our southern coast, *cotton*, produced from the toil of these bodies is the great article of traffic. Bodies safely stowed away for sale in a barracoon, reflect no less consequence on king Joe Harris in Africa, than the same number of bodies at work in the cotton-field, without wages, at the end of the overseer's lash, give to Governor McDuffie in America. The same difference that would be made between slaveholder Preston, or slaveholder Calhoun, and any poor tar-burner, at the south, would be unhesitatingly accorded to king Peter or king Boatswain, when brought along-side of some shirtless collector of palm-oil or ivory, or gold-dust, on the coast. The colonist not having been taught the more recondite mysteries of slaveholding casuistry, is unable to place the two on different platforms of respectability. King Peter *uses* bodies for profit, by *selling* them—the American senator *uses* bodies for profit, by *working* them.\* To the inexperienced the whole appears but one concern—as a large business, divided for greater ease in carrying it on—each party falling into that particular department, which he finds most convenient and profitable for *him*—the “*sansculottes*” prince into the *selling* department,—the American senator into the *buying and consuming* department. The colonist, in many instances at least, would be sadly put to it, to say, why “*buying and consuming*,” and *occasional* selling was quite right in America, whilst *regular* selling ought to be broken up, at all hazards, in Africa.

Moreover, on the coast, the regular slave-traders are the *monied* men. They have their large *factories*. Their abundant supply of goods of every kind,—of powder and ball, guns and swords, of pistols and dirks and rum, throw contempt on the “*petty traffickers*” of the Cape, large as *their* stock of these articles has often been. The truth is, they are the “*great ones*” of the land. And if General Wade Hampton, in his life-time, was gazed at with admiration, and waited on with servile attention, when he visited New York or Philadelphia, because he was the holder of but a thousand slaves at the south—what must be the pleasing consternation excited at the Cape, when Don Pedro Blanco, the annual exporter of four thousand slaves, deigns to pay a visit to the poor, suffering, half-starved Monroviaans?

You, gentlemen, would of, course, feel none of the influence to which we are adverting, but take the mass of uneducated men, brought up in the lowest conditions of life, and the case is widely different.

The experiment made by the British Government at Sierra Leone, gives but feeble encouragement to the hope, that colonies composed, for the most part, of needy, ignorant, and uneducated settlers, exposed to the malignant

\* And selling them, too, whenever occasion calls for it.



influences of every kind, which abound on the western coast, will ever contribute either to putting down the slave trade, or to christianizing the aborigines. Sierra Leone was planted by the efforts of individual philanthropists. It was transferred to the Government (in 1807) about the time the African slave trade was abolished by Parliament—and with a special view to its being made subsidiary to breaking up that abominable traffic. Almost incredible sums have been expended in sustaining Sierra Leone. Troops are stationed there for its protection. Vessels of war are either continually in port, or on the coast to guard it from harm. Schools have been established and liberally supplied with teachers. Religious institutions have been set up, and abundantly provided with persons qualified to instruct. The Governors of the colony have been men of high character—able and prompt, and interested personally in putting down the slave trade. In fine, whatever a powerful government could do for a favorite colony—one that was to be made eminently instrumental in a work which the whole country had warmly at heart, and from which it expected a large measure of true glory, has been done for Sierra Leone. Besides, all the moral influences of the nation were sincerely opposed to the slave trade;—especially have they been for the last twelve or fifteen years. The church throughout, established and dissenting, has been opposed to it;—together with all the clergy and ministers,—none of whom have had the hardihood to plead for it, or any thing kindred to it, on scriptural grounds; all political parties have been opposed to it—so have the Commons,—the Lords,—the Sovereign.

Here, then, is a remarkable case;—of a small and dependent colony exposed, to be sure, to the pernicious operation of contrary and ever present circumstances, but not (to the superficial judgment) of such magnitude as to be irremovable by the great amount of moral, and other influences that such a people could bring to bear upon it. If the end were, in the nature of things, attainable, we might reasonably expect such an experiment to be successful. But it has been unsuccessful. So far from the colony's aiding in putting down the slave trade, the unceasing vigilance of Great Britain has been, and is still, required to keep it from corrupting itself with that abomination. Judge Jeffcott, Chief Justice of Sierra Leone, officially declared in 1831, that the colony "*established for the express purpose of suppressing this vile traffic, was made a mart for carrying it on.*" Parliamentary enquiries put the fact beyond all doubt, that instances have occurred in the colony of persons being actually spirited away, and sold as slaves, by their fellow colonists.

Now, gentlemen, if this experiment, made, we repeat, under the most favorable auspices, has failed, why look you for a different issue of the Librarian experiment, made under the most unfavorable auspices? The slave trade of this the parent country is carried on both by sea and by land,—to an enormous extent—openly and without any necessity or concealment. *The colonists are not ignorant of this.* If a slaver be wrecked on the coast of a free country, and her cargo transmuted into men, our government moves heaven and earth to re-convert it into things, or to obtain indemnity for the traders, who, were the scene changed to Africa, would expiate their crime as pirates, at the yard-arm. *The colonists are not ignorant of this.* The National legislature is favorable to the slave trade—one branch of it refusing to consider—the other, to receive any petitions, praying that it may be

stopped. *The colonists are not ignorant of this.* The President of the United States is favorable to the continuance of the slave-trade—having pledged to the slave-traders and slaveholders all his official powers to prevent the abolition of slavery at the Capitol, till they consent to it. *The colonists are not ignorant of this.* The American Church is not opposed to slavery and the slave-trade. Her ministers and rulers are oftentimes slaveholders—and instances are not wanting where they have been concerned in the systematized traffic. *The colonists are not ignorant of this.* The governing South solemnly asseverates, that it prefers perpetual slavery and its adjunct, the slave-trade, before all the benefits of the UNION—and the governed North submissively responds, *Amen, Amen, so let it be.* *The colonists are not ignorant of this.*

Why, Sirs, do you look for an impression on the colony dissimilar from the lineaments of the nation that makes it? Why for offspring wholly unlike the parent? Is it, that, *cause* has ceased to produce its effect? Or, that men are beginning to gather thorns from grapes and figs from thistles?

But as we have thought proper not to rest this cause on insulated statements, or items of testimony, but rather on those great principles, out of the control of which communities cannot throw themselves, it may be replied, that the slave-trade has, *actually*, been banished from the territory within the jurisdiction of the Colony. The extent of this territory has been variously stated. It is usually set down to be about 300 miles coast-wise,—extending from 10 to 40 into the interior. From this territory, it has been repeated, over and over, in this country, for the last five or six years, that the slave-trade has been wholly exterminated. A late pamphleteer has the temerity to assert, that the Commonwealth of Liberia—is allowed to have suppressed the slave-trade principally to the extent of *seven miles*, on the coast. By whom this has been *allowed* we know not; but we will proceed to adduce some evidence of so strictly authoritative a character as to render the statement, to say the least, quite improbable.

1. Since the settlement of the colony, Pedro Blanco, mentioned above, one of the largest slave-traders in the world, has established himself at the mouth of the Gallinas River, **BETWEEN Monrovia and Sierra Leone**, within fifty miles of the former, and about treble that distance from the latter. What Pedro Blanco's opinion is (and doubtless it is a very sound one) as to the effect of the colonies on his business, the naked fact of his establishing himself in their neighborhood sufficiently indicates.

2. To go no further back than 1836:—

"I have had constant difficulties with the natives, in consequence of the wars in which they are engaged, and the capture of persons to sell as slaves, some of whom have been taken from our purchased territories. Boats have been sent from Spanish slavers into the St. Paul's and slaves have been bought in that river."—Letter from Governor of Liberia, 8th Jan. 1836.

[The St. Paul's penetrates into the very heart of Liberia;—its mouth is within a few miles of Monrovia, and the settlements, Caldwell and Millsburg, are on its banks.]

3. In the Baptist Missionary Magazine for Nov. 1836, Mr. Crocker, a missionary, writing from Edina, says:—

Two or three weeks ago, a little boy, about eight years old, who was frequently following me about, and jabbering in the language of the country,



was carried off, to be sold as a slave.' \* \* \* \* \* We frequently see them [the slavers] lying off, *at no great distance from the shore*, waiting to take in a cargo of slaves. I have seen the king and his son fiercely quarrelling in consequence of drinking rum which the slaver had sent to induce him to trade.'

"We have heard from a source entitled to authority, that a few days ago, a large town belonging to Fartorah, was, in the midst of fancied security, surprised by a party of Big Town people. From 60 to 80 victims were seized and marched down to *LITTLE CAPE MOUNT, where a Spanish schooner, from the leeward coast, was LYING AT THE TIME.* They were immediately bartered for goods, and shipped on board."

{Little Cape Mount is on the coast about two-thirds of the distance from Monrovia to Pedro Blanco's Factory.}

"Within a year, *FOUR SLAVE FACTORIES* have been established almost *within sight of the Colony.*—*Captain Nicholson's report to Secretary of Navy, Jan. 8th, 1837.*

[By colony, we suppose, Captain N. means *Monrovia.*]

5. The British Parliament have lately published various documents relative to the slave trade—among them is an intercepted letter from the captain of a slaver to his owner in Cuba. The captain writes (28th Sep., 1838,) from Little Bassa, (Liberia,) as follows:—

"To-morrow the schooner sails for *NEW SESTOS* (believed to be also in Liberia,) to take on board a cargo of slaves which I have ready there. I have been obliged to have *one hundred sets of shackles made at Cape Messurado,*" (Monrovia.)

6. On the 28th February, 1838, the British consul at the Cape de Verd Islands made the following astonishing disclosures in a letter to Lord Palmerston:—

"On the 15th February, 1838, arrived at this port, a vessel under American colors, named the *MONROVIA*, last from Liberia, with a bill of sale and list of crew from the *collector of that colony.* This vessel had neither register nor a sea letter. I have ascertained, without doubt, that she is a vessel belonging to *Don Pedro Blanco* of the Gallinas: has put in here directed to his agent for a fit-out for the coast, and that *a cargo of slaves is ready for her.* There is a black man on board for a flag captain, who speaks English well. *Don Pedro Blanco's agent in Liberia* is J. N. LEWIS, *commission merchant.*"

7. "Before my arrival here, business of every kind in the colony had become exceedingly dull, and the general impression was, that the patrons in America were losing their interest in affairs here, and that poor Liberia must go down. In this state of things, while our mechanics could find no employment at home, *the slavers offered them plenty of work, high wages and good Spanish Doubloons for pay. The temptation was irresistible, and some whose necessities were too strong for their principles, went among them; but I recalled all the wanderers as soon as I came here.*" \* \* \* \* \*

\* \* \*—*Letter of Gov. Buchanan, 10th Aug. 1839.*

While the facts, that the slave trade was on the increase in the vicinity and almost in sight of Monrovia, and, that the colonists had in various ways connected themselves with the slave traders, were thus unhesitatingly testified to by the officers of the colony, and by gentlemen in our own and the British

Navy, in their communications to their respective Governments, has it not been the burden of almost every colonization meeting in this country, that the slave trade was banished from the jurisdictional confines of Liberia? While we charge no one with intentional misrepresentation, we have good reason to complain of the recklessness that has led to such statements—especially at the very time that the *Newspaper* of the colony contained such information as the following:—

8. "The first requisite to the prosperity and advancement of the colony is the suppression of the slave trade in our vicinity. This trade has been gradually acquiring strength for the last four years. Its ravages have been more fearful, and the vessels engaged in it more numerous, than at any former period of the Colony's history. An exterminating war has raged over an extent of fifty miles around us; nearly all communication with the interior has been cut off; lands have remained untilled, every article of food has advanced 200 per cent in price, and HORROR AND CONFUSION HAVE RAGED ON EVERY SIDE."  
—*Liberia Herald May, 1838.*

We have thus, gentlemen, furnished you with facts that bear especially on such parts of the Colonization scheme, as have of late been almost exclusively held up before the public wherewith to win its favor. With these facts we think you have not before been made acquainted. We have also, presented you with the reasonings which they have given rise to in our minds. With these, it is not to be supposed, that you are familiar.

Having now done what we could, we ask you in view of the whole case, whether you ought longer to take advantage of our weakness to press on us an enterprise that we have unremittingly rejected from the first? Whether you ought to persist in a scheme which nourishes an unreasonable and unchristian prejudice—which persuades legislators to continue their unjust enactments against us in all their rigor—which exposes us to the persecution of the proud and profligate—which cuts us off from employment, and straitens our means of subsistence—which afflicts us with the feeling, that our condition is unstable, and prevents us from making systematic effort for our improvement, or for the advancement of our own usefulness and happiness and that of our families.

We ask for an answer. May it be such as shall give peace to your own consciences, and be approved of God in "the judgment of the great day."

With Christian regard, we are, gentlemen, respectfully yours,

SAMUEL E. CORNISH,  
THEODORE S. WRIGHT.

N.J. Raf. 325.373096 C81

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Cornish, Samuel E.

The colonization scheme  
considered

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